

LEGAL NOTICE
USDA-Forest Service,
Deschutes National
Forest, Crescent
Ranger District
Notice of 30-day
Comment Period
on the Draft
Environmental
Assessment for
Upper Little
Deschutes
Restoration Project

The Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) for the Upper Little Deschutes Restoration Project has been completed and is now available for a 30-day comment period. A copy of this Draft EA is available upon request by contacting the project lead listed at the end of this notice. The DEA is available on the internet at: https://data.ecosystem-management.org/nepaweb/nepa_project_exp.php?project=51024

The purpose and need of the project is restoration related: 1) Maintaining or restoring the existing values and ecosystem services that a riparian environment provides through improving the hydrological function of the Little Deschutes River to benefit the unique habitats found within or adjacent to the river. 2) Maintaining or enhancing recreational experiences, with a sustainable road system that provides access while increasing wildlife security and reducing sedimentation to the river.

The project area (6,286 acres) encompasses two separate areas along the Little Deschutes River that are separated by private land. It includes a northern portion (also known as Odell Pasture), and the southern area that is adjacent to Highway 58 and partially bordered on the east side by private land. Forest Service Road 6125 (Gullick Road) traverses through this portion and the western edge of the northern portion of the project area. The legal description is: Township 24S, Range 8E, Sections 26, 32, 33, 34, 35 and Township 25S, Range 8E, Sections 4, 5, 8, 17, 19, and 20, Wil-

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Alternatives considered are the No Action Alternative (Alternative A) and the Proposed Action (Alternative B). The Proposed Action includes **Riparian enhancement** and restoration for the enhancement of habitat for Oregon spotted frogs and various trout species through the installation of instream structures consisting of single to multiple logs and/or beaver dam analog structures that would be constructed of smaller logs that would span the river and reconnection of diverted water to the river. Also included would be enhancement of riparian and aspen habitats through the removal of encroaching lodgepole pine, and removing unauthorized bridge type structures.

Sustainable recreation proposed actions would provide recreational opportunities while reducing impacts to riparian and sensitive upland wildlife habitat. There are 19 dispersed sites (DS) and two dump sites (DUMP) that have been identified in the planning area which will be redefined or decommissioned.

Sustainable transportation proposed actions would create a road system that maintains public access throughout the project area while protecting wildlife and reducing resource damage such as vegetation loss and river sedimentation due to unmanaged vehicle use. Unauthorized routes would be decommissioned and/or rehabilitated to the degree needed to return the ground to a productive state.

Your participation is encouraged during the public comment period. Comments would be most helpful if they included your name and address; the title of the project; specific comments, along with supporting reasons why you believe they are relevant and should be considered; and a signature or other verification of identity. Written, facsimile, hand delivered, oral and electronic comments concerning this action will be accepted for 30 calendar days following publication of notification in The Bulletin, Bend, Oregon (see 218.25(a)(2)). The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period for this proposal. Those wishing to comment should not

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rely on dates or timeframes provided by any other source. Regulations prohibit extending the length of the comment period. Comments can be mailed or hand delivered to the Responsible Official, Daniel Rife, District Ranger, Crescent Ranger District, PO Box 208, (136471 Hwy 97 N.), Crescent, Oregon, 97733, or FAX at (541) 433-3224.

The business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Oral comments can be provided to Daniel Rife, Crescent District Ranger, only during normal business hours via telephone (541) 433-3200 or in person.

Comments can be filed electronically at: comments-pacificnort-hwest-deschutes-crescent@fs.fed.us. Electronic comments must be submitted as part of the e-mail message or as an attachment in plain text (.txt), Microsoft Word (.doc), rich text format (.rtf), or portable document format (.pdf). E-mails submitted to addresses other than the one listed above, or in formats other than those listed or containing viruses, will be rejected.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this project and will be available for public inspection.

Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those wishing to be eligible to object must meet the information requirements of 36 CFR 218.

The Upper Little Deschutes Restoration EA project is subject to the pre-decisional administrative review process pursuant to 36 CFR 218 subparts A and B (aka, the objection process).

For further information, contact Joan Kittrell, District Wildlife Biologist, Crescent Ranger District, PO Box 208, Crescent, Oregon, 97733 or call at (541) 433-3237.